

Opportunity to Object
Otter Project
Allegheny National Forest Service
Marienville Ranger District

The draft decision notice for the Otter Environmental Assessment is now ready for review. It is available from the Marienville Ranger District, 131 Smokey Lane, Marienville, PA 16239 or on-line at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=55025>. The Responsible Official, District Ranger Robert T. Fallon is proposing to implement the proposed action alternative, as described in the Otter Environmental Assessment. The 14,506-acre project area is in Highland, Jones, and Ridgway Townships in Elk County, Pennsylvania. The proposed action includes timber harvesting on 1,587 acres with associated reforestation treatments, non-native plant species treatments on 67 acres, wildlife habitat enhancements on 117 acres, large wood introductions along 30.2 miles of stream, lime application on 272 acres, 1.2 miles of road construction using new corridors, 1.0 miles of road construction using existing corridors, 1.7 miles of road realignment, and applying high quality road surfacing to 14.3 miles of road.

This project is subject to the objection process pursuant to 36 CFR 218, Subparts A and B. Objections will only be accepted from those who submitted timely and specific written comments about this project during the scoping or the 30-day public comment period in accordance with 36 CFR 218.5(a). Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted timely, specific written comments regarding the proposed project unless based on new information arising after the designated comment opportunities. Objections must be submitted within 45 calendar days after publication of this notice in *The Kane Republican*. The publication date in the newspaper of record is the only means by which to calculate the time to file an objection. Those wishing to object should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source. Regulations prohibit extending the time to file an objection. The objection must contain the minimum content requirements specified in 36 CFR 218.8(d), and incorporation of documents by reference is permitted only as provided in 218.8(b).

It is the objector's responsibility to ensure timely filing of a written objection with the reviewing officer pursuant to 36 CFR 218.9. It is the objector's responsibility to ensure timely filing of a written objection with the reviewing officer pursuant to §218.9. Timeliness is determined by: (1) the date of the U.S. Postal Service postmaster for an objection received before the close of the fifth business day after the objection filing period; (2) the agency's electronically generated posted date and time for email and facsimiles; (3) the shipping date for delivery by private carrier for an objection received before the close of the fifth business day after the objection filing period; or (4) the official agency date stamp showing receipt of hand delivery. For emailed objections, the sender should receive an automated electronic acknowledgement from the agency as confirmation of receipt. If the sender does not receive an automated acknowledgment of receipt of the objection, it is the sender's responsibility to ensure timely filing by other means. All objections are available for public inspection during and after the objection process.

Objections, including attachments, must be filed by mail, fax, express delivery, messenger service, email or hand-delivery to: USDA-Forest Service, Eastern Region, Objection Reviewing

Officer, 626 E. Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53202; FAX to (414) 944-3963, Attn: Administrative Review Staff; email to: objections-eastern-region@usda.gov; hand-delivery Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., excluding federal holidays. Acceptable formats for electronic objections are text or html email, Adobe portable document format (pdf), and other formats viewable in Microsoft Office applications.

At a minimum, an objection must include the following: (1) The objector's name and address, with a telephone number, if available; (2) a signature or other verification of authorship upon request (a scanned signature for email may be filed with the objection); (3) when multiple names are listed on an objection, identification of the lead objector (verification of the identity of the lead objector must be provided upon request); (4) the name of the proposed project, the name and title of the responsible official, and the name(s) of the national forest(s) and/or ranger district(s) on which the proposed project will be implemented; (5) a description of those aspects of the proposed project addressed by the objection, including specific issues related to the proposed project; if applicable, how the objector believes the environmental analysis or draft decision specifically violates law, regulation, or policy; suggested remedies that would resolve the objection; supporting reasons for the reviewing officer to consider; and (6) a statement that demonstrates the connection between prior specific written comments on the particular proposed project or activity and the content of the objection, unless the objection concerns an issue that arose after the designated opportunities for comment.

If no objection is received, a final decision may occur on, but not before, five business days from the close of the objection filing period. If an objection is received, a final decision will not occur before all instructions identified by the Reviewing Officer have been addressed. Additional information can be obtained by contacting the Marienville Ranger District at (814) 927-5700.

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